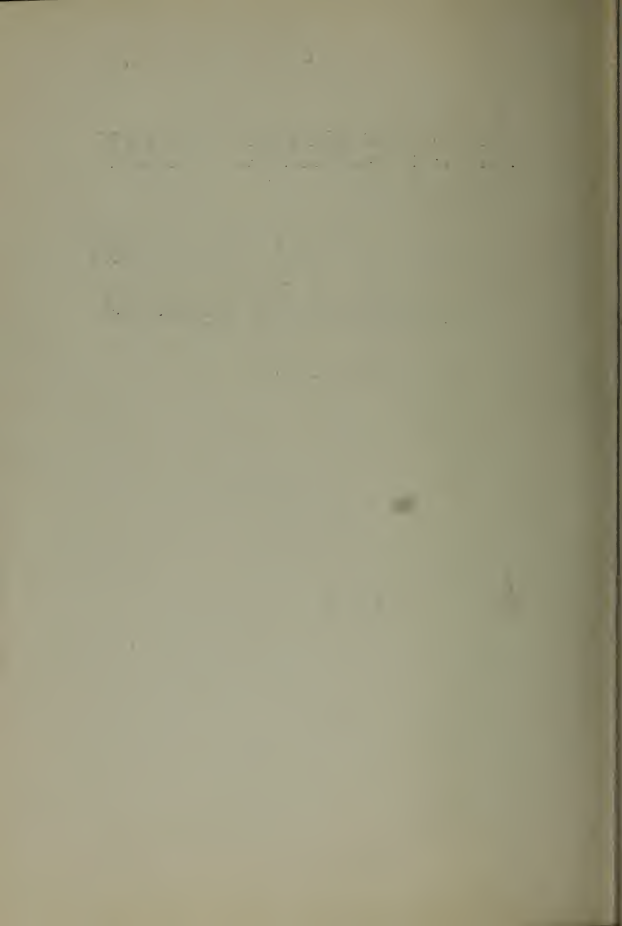


**LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 1395**  
**Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius**

# **Instantaneous Personal Magnetism Debunked**

**Ben Moore**



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## INSTANTANEOUS PERSONAL MAGNETISM

*Ben Moore*

It is neither fair nor just that information relative to "Instantaneous Personal Magnetism" be withheld from our readers. Why should "the most powerful agency in life," to quote from the author of the book itself, be available to Lions, Kiwanians and Rotarians, to the exclusion of their less fortunate fellow-countrymen?

Subscribers of *The Lion*, monthly organ of the luncheon club bearing the same ferocious name, have known for several months about the great philanthropic enterprise set on foot by the Ralston University Press, which aims in the words of the University's spokesman, to "give you magnetic power in 24 hours."

"The moment you read my secrets of personal magnetism," he continues, "you can apply them. Instantly the fetters that have held you down are struck off. You will laugh at obstacles that once seemed unsurmountable—you will toss aside timidity and awkwardness—you will feel your powers doubled, trebled!"

Possibly, to persons who are already sufficiently magnetized for practical purposes, these simple statements of fact would carry little, if any, appeal. But to an unmagnetic personality such as my own the inducement was irresistible. I signed the coupon in the corner of the page, and in due time received the volume.

Accompanying the book was a letter from the publisher, which read, in part:

Dear Student of Instantaneous Personal Magnetism:

Do you want Money, Power, Influence, Fame, Happiness, the Glory of Success! Answer "yes" or "no."

Faced thus with the necessity of making a categorical reply, I was compelled to admit a craving for each and all of the above vanities.

The method is now open to you [the letter went on] in the world famous studies embracing all human powers, to which "Instantaneous Personal Magnetism" introduces you. Demonstration of wonderful results have already been made in over 800,000 cases. Don't handicap yourself by losing this magic key. It opens the doors to wealth untold—to Magnetism, the most powerful force in the Universe. We sell it at cost, solely to create new friends and patrons.

With such preliminary information concerning the potency of the book, it was with some trepidation, and not a little palpitation of the heart that I essayed the effort which I was assured would make me magnetic within the brief space of a day and a night. Before I had finished the preface, I had learned facts which clearly demonstrate that the compilers of "Who's Who," and various other biographical encyclopedias, have been guilty of a monumental blunder, or else have leagued together in a vast conspiracy of silence. The author of "Instantaneous Personal Magnetism," one Edmund Shaftesbury, numbered among his "close friends, students or endorsers of the

systems created by" him, the following persons, not altogether unknown to Fame:

Charles Bradlaugh, John Bright, C. S. Parnell, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, William E. Gladstone, Edwin Booth, Charles Sumner, Benjamin F. Butler, John A. Logan, John B. Gough, Cardinal Gibbons, Dwight L. Moody, Henry Ward Beecher.

It is a striking example of the injustice of the world that the names of these men should have achieved the prominence which has been accorded them, while that of the benefactor to whom was largely due credit for the unusual fund of personal magnetism possessed by each has been entirely overlooked by all Nineteenth Century biographers.

In proof of a laudable desire to deal with facts, rather than with mere theories and estimates, the following statistics are given, showing the practical results attained by students who have been made magnetic by reading the book:

2,781 pastors have had their salaries raised.

7,793 lawyers "rose to the very heights of success."

12,624 doctors have risen "out of mediocre conditions to the very highest in their profession."

For a time I was curious to know why the effect of the book should be so disproportionately evident in favor of doctors. This was explained when I read on page 382 the following simple statement:

When a person dies solely because the machinery stops, as when he is the victim of acute indigestion, drowning, shock, anesthesia, heart failure, asphyxia, neurasthenia and other causes, he

is called dead enough to bury, although all that is needed is some power to set in motion again the machinery of his life. . . . Doctors say that fully 33 percent of all burials are of persons whose life machinery has merely stopped, but who need only some power to set it going again. Just think of it!

We may readily deduce from this that the method whereby most of the 12,624 doctors rose "to the very highest in their profession" may have consisted in furnishing the magnetic power required to resurrect a part of the 33 percent of prematurely dead people. It is too well known for comment that nothing so enhances the reputation of a physician with his patients and with the public in general as his skill in resurrecting the dead.

It is not stated whether or not any undertakers have ever been rendered magnetic, or if so, what may have been the effect.

The uncanny properties of this work of literature are thus further recognized:

Since it is true that this book itself is charged to the full with the power of magnetism, we venture to assert that a single reading of its pages will not only draw the reader to it in an inseparable partnership, but will also, in and of itself, have aroused in such reader a very marked degree of acquired personal magnetism. One reading of this work will effect a complete and revolutionary change in the reader. This cannot be said of any other work of human origin.

It is interesting also to learn that "the character of the magnetic fire is more or less influenced by eye-color." Thus, I was somewhat humiliated to find that, though I possess the natural eye-color that entitles me to be called beautiful, I can never hope to be either deep,



cold or affectionate, without first laboriously acquiring those qualities by means of suitable magnetic exercises. For, says Shaftesbury:

All human beings belong to one of the following magnetic temperaments:

- (a) The Beautiful .....Blue
- (b) The Cold .....Gray
- (c) The Deep .....Black
- (d) The Affectionate .....Brown

The following unique experiment indicates that the practitioner of magnetic power need not depend upon luminous dials, flashlights and such devices in order to tell the time, or locate objects in the dark. He can, if he chooses, furnish his own illumination.

In experimenting in a darkened room with the glow of the eye, we have witnessed lines of fire proceeding far into the room when the eye has been made tense by will power. The magnetic eye is always tense.

And the process, absurdly simple, of acquiring the ability to tense the eye is thus set out in detail:

We have for years used a plan of shifting locations which we find to be the best method of tensing the brain and eye, as follows:

8	7	9
up left,	up front,	up right,
2	1	3
level left,	straight ahead,	level right
5	4	6
down left,	down front,	down right.

While holding the eyes in the positions indicated by the numbers, repeat the following remarks with their full meaning stamped in your tones:

When the eyes are at (1), repeat: "I am talking to you and you must hear me."

## INSTANTANEOUS

When the eyes are at (2), repeat: "You cannot escape me."

When the eyes are at (3), repeat: "Beware! Do not make me angry!"

When the eyes are at (4), repeat: "I will do no wrong."

When the eyes are at (5), repeat: "Get thee behind me, Satan."

When the eyes are at (6), repeat: "I am stronger than my enemies."

When the eyes are at (7), repeat: "Thou God seest me."

When the eyes are at (8), repeat: "Right is mighty and will prevail."

When the eyes are at (9), repeat: "Angels hold watch and ward over my life."

You may have to keep at it for weeks, but the power will come, and, once come, it always remains.

The new light which is shed by the author on many of the hitherto perplexing problems of psychology, biology, physics and other sciences, is little less than amazing. For example, it has long been erroneously thought that to be devoured by a wild animal is a process causing more or less discomfort to the devouree. This idea is dispelled by Shaftesbury in a few well-chosen words:

Life dies most happily and most easily in the clutches of other life. The bird that must end its days in the slow process of old age suffers many a month of torture waiting for the end; but in the jaws of the cat or the fangs of the snake it finds a pleasurable release from the agonies of living; an enjoyment that is participated in by the victim as much as by the devourer.

Similarly, we are presented with a new view of a well-known classic which has not heretofore attained the recognition to which it is

## PERSONAL MAGNETISM.

entitled as a work of history. Speaking of Mt. Ida, in ancient Magnesia, the author says:

This may be the very locality alluded to in the Arabian Nights as the Magnetic Mountain, which drew out the iron bolts and fastenings from passing ships, and sank them instantly.

The extraordinary faculty of Shaftesbury for assembling accurate statistics is indicated by the following note on divorce:

Where two persons are drawn to each other by the power of magnetism, they never separate, and there has never been a divorce in any such case.

The American people have but recently emerged from a bitter controversy concerning the method of handling the Demon Rum. The question is by no means settled yet. But all that is needed to settle it is public recognition of the following facts, developed by Shaftesbury as the result of much painstaking research:

All kinds of cures have been tried to overcome the craving for liquor, and none have been very successful, until the method was devised whereby all congestion was removed, and then it was learned that craving for stimulants is the cry of a congested stomach. . . . The desire for stimulants has always disappeared when all congestion has been removed.

A warning is sounded to those persons who, either through ignorance or perverted appetite, indulge in the pernicious practice of gravy-eating in hotels:

In hotels gravy is bought of gravy makers, who produce it by the hundreds of barrels, as a business.

Some further contributions to modern science are as follows:

The Third Brain (medulla oblongata) attends to all these functions: Digestion, Circulation, Respiration.

Some people curve their backs so much when they get old that they must support themselves with canes when they walk, to prevent pitching over.

Luther Burbank, by placing one hand on the chest of a person, and the other hand on the back, was able to throw so powerful a current of magnetism into a person that cures were effected that defied all treatments of science or medicine.

For the benefit of such students as may clamor for the fulfillment of the publisher's 24-hour guarantee, the short cut is set out on page 170:

*The quickest way to accumulate personal magnetism, if a person wishes to secure results the very first day after this book has been read, is to turn your mind into that of an optimist.*

The unique benefits which may be derived socially by owners of "Instantaneous Personal Magnetism" are thus set forth:

Any man or woman, or young person, who possesses a copy of this book will be admitted to membership in the Magnetism Club of America, without fees or dues or expense of any kind, and without obligation, except that one or more extra copies of this book must be kept on hand ready for immediate inspection and delivery to any other person who may wish it.

In conclusion the author allows himself to give voice to some severe strictures on the modern novel, and also reveals the secret of the absurdly low price on his own work:

Last year several million novels sold for \$2 each, most of them trashy; some for \$2.50 each; and some for \$3 each. This book of personal mag-

netism, now recognized as "the most powerful agency in life," vastly larger than these novels, and containing a whole university of training in its pages, may be obtained for the trifling sum mentioned (§3). This, in educational circles, is known as a merely nominal price; and it is due to the persistent demand of the author that the price has been made nominal.

Mr. Shaftesbury, we are told, is also the author of "Brain Tests," a book devoted to the elucidation of the following thesis:

The seat of Intelligence is in the membranes, never in the brain. What is immortal in a human being, whether soul, spirit or mind, is seated wholly in the membranes.

I have said that I signed a coupon in ordering the book. This coupon contained a statement that the volume would be sent on five days' approval. There remains to be related the most singular phase of the entire transaction, which demonstrates convincingly, albeit inversely, the correctness of the author's main theory. It is well known that when the poles of a magnet become reversed, the effect is to repel, instead of to attract. This is exactly what happened with respect to the book and myself. Upon taking it from its wrapper, I inadvertently opened it upside down. The effect of this reversal of the poles could not, despite every effort on my part, be counteracted. The repulsive force continued, until I was finally impelled by it to return the volume to its wrapper, affix the necessary postage, and deposit it in the postoffice, addressed to the publisher, all within the allotted period of five days.

## HOW TO RESIST SCIENTIFIC SALESMEN

*Cloyd Hampton Valentine*

Time and again, during the past few years, I have been informed that every man on the face of the globe is a salesman. There can be no logical denial of this fact. A person may offer earthly wares to another, he may proffer his services; he may attempt to convince his friends that his is an exemplary character. In any case he is trying to sell something, whether that particular something be material merchandise or ideas.

It is with material goods that I am here concerned. In general, throughout human history, salesmanship connected with such articles has been largely hit-or-miss. There was nothing scientific about it.

Now that situation endured from the beginning of the world till the end of the administration of William McKinley. But during the past twenty years or so, a marked change has occurred. Salesmanship, like dentistry and vocational advisership, has developed into a profession. It has a technique, a *savoir faire* and, unfortunately for us prospective customers, a psychology.

The salesman (drummers we called them in the good old days) used to spend years in becoming familiar with the wares which he had to sell. But that condition is at last done away. Since he has become an adept at psychology, it is no longer necessary for the salesman to

know what he is talking about, in order to earn a living.

This salesman now attends a school; or, if he cannot afford such a privilege, he can achieve his result just as efficiently by a fortnight's reading of a self-instruction book. Send fifty cents to Department F 442, American Psycho-Success Institute, Oolalala, North Dakota.

The salesman is taught to dress elegantly, because that will have a dazzling effect upon us and render us incapable of resisting his appeal. He is taught to have confidence in his "line"; for, how can he hope to convince others of the value of an article, unless he himself believes in its efficacy? He is taught to catalog people; at one glance he can tell whether you belong in Class Eight, and must be pleaded with, or in Class Eighteen, and must be commanded. *Et cetera ad infinitum.*

Here are you and I, humble mortals, anxious to continue in earthly existence as long as we can conveniently do so. To that end we must save our pennies. Coolidge has spoken. Yet, how *can* we save our pennies? Alive in a previous decade, we could have summoned Fido. And then, as the college freshman once wrote, our foeman would have beaten a hasty retreat in all directions. But now, having the newer psychology in his mental grasp, or being in the grasp of the newer psychology, the salesman is invincible. We yield to his onslaughts. We pay him three dollars down, and agree to settle the balance of the account at one dollar per month

for what may be the remainder of our natural lives.

The affairs of which we treat are matters to which I have devoted considerable thought. I have long since realized that the possibility of social salvation lies only in the ability of the race to construct something able successfully to combat scientific salesmanship.

One method, which I employ with favorable result, I have entitled The Alibi. I recommend it. You ascertain and memorize the names of two firms which manufacture the same type of article. Thus, when the Fuller Brush man rings my bell, I say: "I am so sorry; but the Better Brush Company's representative was here last week, and I am all stocked up." When confronted by such a statement, what can the stunned salesman do except withdraw?

Another worthy scheme I call The Contagion. My children, out playing, have instructions to inform me of the approach of any salesman. Then I put in the window a red placard, bearing, in heavy black type, the words SCARLET FEVER. The salesman, reading the sign, finds his psychology paralyzed, and tiptoes away. I have known only one instance in which The Contagion failed to work. The salesman was a Christian Scientist.

A third plan is The Impersonation. It occurred to me quite accidentally one morning when, feeling the need for exercise, I essayed to mow my lawn. A salesman appeared.

"Is the boss in?" he asked, evidently mistaking me for the hired man.



"Naw," I replied, "he's in Europe, and won't be back till fall."

Those are a few suggestions. As I survey them, however, I am aware that they represent merely a preliminary digging into a field worthy of most consecrated human endeavor. To change the metaphor, let us prepare, that we may eventually dethrone the Kaiser of Scientific Salesmanship, and make the world safe for prospective customers.

## GREAT HUMBUGS

*Marc T. Greene*

No one has ever taken any serious exceptions to the pronouncement of the late Phineas T. Barnum, that the American people like to be "humbugged." For the great showman was offering no affront in that observation. He meant only that the average American parted genially with his fifty-cent piece for the privilege of gazing tolerantly on much that was so obviously a departure from the genuine as, in that very fact, to provide amusement. Moreover, for their half-dollars the show-goers of Barnum's day got a good deal more than humbuggery. They got many strange things that even the "world's greatest" circuses of these days cannot or do not provide. In short, they got their value and more; and if that were being humbugged it was naturally accepted without rancor.

But what would Phineas T. say should he find himself in the midst of the thousand and

one forms of quackery, the numberless varieties of humbuggery, that are practiced upon the American people today, and not admittedly for the purpose of furnishing a little harmless entertainment, but mostly with malice aforethought for the purpose of securing the largest possible amount of coin for the least possible value in return? Barnum's "humbugs" were mild and inoffensive, and as obvious as those of the ten-year-old who demands his parents' attendance upon his own first "circus" consisting of the patient family domestic animals in slatted boxes.

But the great American humbug of today is in many respects a dangerous and a menacing thing. It not only parts its victims from their worldly goods on any and every conceivable kind of false pretense, but over and over again seriously threatens their peace of mind and their physical well-being. Yet despite the fact that "exposures" of fakes, one and another, are almost as frequent as the issues of the weekly and monthly periodicals, the quackery goes merrily on, proving beyond cavil that the American people, tolerant and slow to distrust, are the most gullible of all people.

Yes, there is no doubt at all that Americans, on the whole, are a trustful folk, not readily regarding with suspicion any person or thing, surprisingly prone to believe what they are told, if the telling carries the least degree of conviction, and to believe what they read, too, if only the subject is set forth in large type and in sufficiently forceful language. To illustrate:

Turn the pages of the average "popular" magazine, and what is about the first thing we encounter? Ah! Our old friend, "Lionel, the Lion-hearted." Observe what *he* offers you and in what effective language, emphasized by photographs revealing the surprising results of his "system" upon himself. "Come on now, you moochers, get a little pep into the old system! Don't fool yourselves any longer that you are anything like men! I'll give you an arm that'll look like Gene Tunney's! I'll take six inches off your belly and stick it on your chest! Come on, now! Quit looking like something the cat dragged in, and come to me, *come to me*, COME TO ME!

Thus the "get-strong-quick" man. You all know him, and if by any chance you have yielded to his urge to "fill out the coupon" his airily-worded "literature" has followed you for years ere he has abandoned hope of landing you. He has many variants, nor do they all address you thus forcefully, language as quoted being distasteful to certain delicate sensibilities, even in America. The variant takes some such form as this:

"Do you crave a greater degree of physical manhood, my friend, a greater efficiency in all concerns? Do you feel that you are unable to make the most of certain opportunities? Then let us consult together. By the aid of my enticing elucidations (an exact quotation from a popular magazine advertisement) all that you desire can be accomplished. But I respectfully urge you not to delay. An addressed envelope will bring full particulars.

And five dollars down with five more in three months will secure the enticing elucidations."

The very number of these folks make it clear that this is a profitable form of quackery. Yet nothing that they can do, or expect to do, for you is in the least degree beyond your own capacity to do for yourself, especially with the aid of suggestions and advice from the family physician. It is humbuggery, pure and simple, and such humbuggery as would have left Bar-num aghast.

\* \* \*

Another magazine. What have we here, pray? "Would you like to write stories?" Well, who wouldn't? Come on, then; here's the way to do it! "The Selleman Gryn School of Fiction writing, 217864 Ccean Boulevard, Santa Bonica, California. Our pupils have just sold three scenarios to Charlie Chaplin for \$1,000 each. You may be the next. We'll teach you in ten lessons how to write fiction, poetry, essays, history, science, biology or scenarios, whichever you like. Ten dollars now and a hundred when you've sold your first story. Why drudge at the desk or punch the time-clock when you can enjoy the glorious independence, freedom, happiness and wealth which are the possession of every writer? Look at Victor Hugo, look at Bernard Shaw, look at Mrs. Selleman Gryn! You can do it, too! Fill out the coupon and send ten dollars at once!"

How is it that people fall for such obvious bunk as that? Yet they do, for the magazines are full of these advertisements. If they didn't

pay they wouldn't be there. Nothing can be more certain than that. And the American people, victims of the great national scheme of humbuggery, do the paying. Yet no single person who ever answered one of these advertisements learned to "write" by any such means. The thing simply cannot be done in that way, of course, never has been and never will be. And no writing person having the least respect for himself—or herself—would lend the authority of a name to such arrant quackery. If you have the gift of expression, soon or later you will write—with more or less success. If you haven't it, you never will write—in any degree that will bring you any distinction or fortune, that is to say. And though you devote a lifetime to it, and patronize every "school" of literature on both shores of the Atlantic and Hollywood Boulevard, you will achieve nothing. The man who said that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains was an ass and knew it. For achievement in literature or music or painting—call it "art" or whatever you like—is not a matter of industry or perseverance except as you possess the golden gift; then it must be, or even the gift will avail you little. But without that—stick to your desk and your time-clock, and deem yourself lucky to have a job at all. And incidentally, to console yourself, place no faith in the glowing descriptions of a writing man's highly-colored existence, "free, independent, happy and rich." Know that it is not in the scheme of things mundane that these much-to-be-desired conditions should go together.

I have lately received—in response to the coupon and addressed envelope—a “contract” from a “song-publishing house.” I shall have to admit that I played a low-down trick on these gentry. Yes, I sent them a couple of published poems of my own, poems published in a periodical which I deemed it highly improbable they would have seen or be interested in. They selected the inferior of the two lyrics which they agreed to “revise” in accord with their professional experience and poetic judgment, after which suitable music would be composed by a gentleman of much ability. The latter was convincingly attested by an accompanying list of his prolific output of “popular” songs, at least one of which was “generally acknowledged by experts to be the greatest song-ballad of all time.”

Clause “7” of the contract entailed a first payment of five dollars by the “author” to the “principal,” and similar sums at monthly intervals until the full amount of \$105 had been paid. In return for this “one thousand professional copies of your song will be printed, forty copies sent to forty music publishers, fifteen copies to fifteen manufacturers of phonograph records or player-piano rolls, thirty copies to thirty radio-broadcasting stations, and one hundred copies to one hundred theater managers and theater orchestra leaders with instructions to distribute them among professional singers.”

Inasmuch as a number of these crooks have been jailed for misuse of the mails during the

past ten or fifteen years, their "contract" now invariably contains the following qualification, printed in small type on the back: "This contract is not an indication of belief on our part that you will profit financially. We absolutely refuse to express an opinion about the commercial value or merit of any song or song-poem."

I hear you observe that "there must be something lacking in a man who falls for that sort of stuff." Well, for the matter of that, I heard a young woman at an adjoining restaurant table the other day express the rather depressing opinion that there was something lacking in everyone of us. But mark you this. There never has been a time in all recorded history when the urge to make money quickly was greater than it is in America today; or when money would—or so runs the popular impression—gain more for its possessor. Thus any chance is worth staking a little upon. Wild yarns are spun of the fortunes made by writing asinine drivel to be perpetrated upon a long-suffering people by means of radio and other nuisances. It looks easy. One is told in convincing advertisements that it is easy. Why not have a go at it? Thus, once more, the aforesaid American gullibility.

All this sort of quackery has the effect of destroying one's peace of mind because it is full of suggestions that all is not as it should be with one, that one is weak where he might be among the elite of earth, that he is drudging through an uncongenial occupation when he



might be achieving the glory—and fortune—that is popularly supposed to be the lot of the literary man. And so on. There are many more advertisements that hold forth impossible ideals and point to unattainable goals. Not infrequently it becomes a conviction with these victims that they are far too good for their job, that they have hidden talents and latent abilities which might bring them to independence and glory; and so they become useless at the thing they are doing.

\* \* \*

But even worse than all this is the humbuggery, so widely practiced in America today, that seriously endangers physical health. It is a thousand forms, from vicious smokables constructed of anything and everything but pure tobacco, to synthetic drinkables and eatables, and even to certain cults and isms. Glance at this blithe bit in another well-known periodical which I shall call *The Official Organ of American Babbittry*. Recognize it, don't you? "Come on, now! Pack up that old jimmy pipe and get set behind it! And don't let the fact get away from you that King Canute's the stuff to pack it with! Get that, fellows? It's the he-man smoke, is King Canute, and the guy that's behind a pipe packed with it is all set for anything from a game of checkers to a lion hunt. Don't fool yourselves, men! As to good imitations, there ain't no such animule! We've got a special process that puts King Canute where the Gods of Olympus would have hankered for it. Get busy, now! Play the he-man



and get behind a jimmy-pipe full of good old King Canute!"

Regard the glorious scenery from a railway train. Do you see any of it? You do not! Here is what you *do* see. "Hot diggetty dog! Here's the best cigarette since Cleopatra lighted the original Egyptian for Mark Anthony!" Or, "Here you are! Blend of the best tobacco on earth. Heavy Wallop Cigarette! Our process costs a million but we do it for your good!" Amazing altruists, these makers of near-cigarettes. And so it goes, this beautiful American roadside scenery consisting chiefly of billboards and ghastly disfigurements of the landscape bearing names of a thousand and one things, at least half of which are accurately described as humbugs.

\* \* \*

Even more menacing are the synthetic drinks, the artificially-colored and artificially-preserved fruits, the ices "renewed" for weeks and even months and utterly unfit for human consumption. Several years ago, as a result of long-continued agitation against this sort of thing, it began to be required that every establishment selling artificially-preserved condiments make that fact clear to the public. But is the consumption of such filth affected? Bless you, no! For the shop-keeper will tell you that benzoate of soda, formaldehyde and what not does you no harm "if taken in small quantities." Yet the fact is, that every time you consume a liquid with artificially-preserved and artificially-colored syrup, every time you eat near

ice cream which has been refrozen and renewed anywhere from four to forty times, every time you attack those vicious and viscous masses of chemically-preserved fruits and syrups and venerable ice creams known as "sundaes," you are not only insulting your patient stomach, but in most cases actually menacing your health. They are all humbugs of the first order, such still as our sensible forefathers would never have dreamed of touching, such concoctions as no sane Americans make a habit of consuming even now. The enormous increase in this consumption since prohibition is distinctly and definitely one of the evils thereof; and that is so without regard to your views for or against. But the form of these offerings—and especially their color, chemically originated though it is—appeals to the eye; and there the American succumbs.

Yet all these are but a few of the great American humbugs of today. Think of the thousand and one "isms," especially prevalent in southern California, which have nothing whatever back of them but the cleverness of some man or woman who has found a new path to riches leading through the well-known and oft-proven American gullibility! Think of the hundreds of quack remedies for this and that, particularly popular under a prohibitory regime! Think, indeed, of what the American people swallow—literally and figuratively—and then wonder if Barnum wasn't very moderate in his pronouncement of fifty years ago.

## PUTTING PUNCH IN YOUR PERSONALITY

*Ballard Brown*

The late Orison Swett Marden is undisputed claimant, whether he would enjoy the title or no, of the ranking as firmest believer in and most zealous disciple of the personality punch. To him it became as a religion to the fanatic. Marden was born in Thornton, New Hampshire, about 1850. He died on March 10, 1924, but his doctrine goes marching on. The list of his works having either direct or indirect relation to the subject is a long one. It reads like the bibliography of an Alger. His books number at least forty-eight. Their titles reveal the man as well as could any brief critical estimate. As early as 1894 we find him author of "Pushing to the Front." Scarcely a year passed without his producing a similar effort, and in several years they number two and three. Such inspiring phrases as *Success* (the name of the magazine, incidentally, which he founded in 1897 and edited until 1912) "Cheerfulness as a Life Power," "Winning Out," "An Iron Will," "Every Man a King," "The Power of Personality," "Success Nuggets," "The Miracle of Right Thought," "Everybody Ahead," "How to Get What You Want," and the like, are characteristic.

Marden was president of the League for the Larger Life, and it is scarcely necessary to say what constituted the view of "the larger life"

in the eyes of him and his disciples. *Success Magazine*, or rather one of its derivatives, is still a power on the magazine stands. The number of nitwits who think they can achieve Success (always with a capital "S," for with believers it is a religion) by emulating the current high priests of material wealth is as unlimited as it is surprising. In reality this class entertains no such illusions; they would stamp the individual attempting to land the personality punch first hand, as outlined in the Success books, magazines, and various bastard articles, as an idiot and a fool, a fellow to be laughed at. But strangely they continue to patronize and believe in the creed so long as it is set forth in the comparative safety of cold print.

To that almost inexplicable phase of human nature, the present-day hawkers of the personality punch owe their fat living off of the yokelry of the land. Marden has gone on, but his work lives. He would be surprised to see some of the forms and promotions it is taking. The man himself, devoting a long life to preservation of the bubble, must have been sincere. There is reason to doubt that some of his present-day prototypes are equally sincere. Victimizing the drab nobodies who want to rise from dishwashers and clerks to, perhaps, heads of steel mills and senators, must be a profitable business.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have before me an attractive letterhead, embellished with an imitation gold seal. It

comes from the Personal Analysis Bureau, 41 East Chestnut Street, Chicago, of which one Forrest A. Kingsbury, Ph.D., is "chief of staff." The legend reveals that the Personal Analysis Bureau is "a corporation extending a professional service of Personal Analysis and Guidance." This with a beautiful tail on the "y" in "analysis," racing around aimlessly for a couple of scrolls and giving the whole a decidedly refined appearance.

The letter, which comes from John C. Kram as secretary, begins thus:

Every great man attributes his success to certain personal traits or qualifications. He is big enough to appreciate that he must constantly apply the laws of self-development in order to have a better understanding of not only himself, but also his business associates and his employees; and not until he applies these laws can he achieve the "picture" he has been striving for.

Then one learns of its purpose:

For the man who has gained success through practical business experience, who is ambitious to further extend his influence and earning power, and realizes that the first step in self-improvement is to find out just how high in type, as an executive, he really is—a new and effective Personal Analysis and Development Service has been created.

I am no stickler on split infinitives, having some such feeling about them as does Havelock Ellis in *The Dance of Life*, in his chapter on *The Art of Writing*, but I wonder if the Personal Analysis Bureau will not be shocked to discover its commission of the unpardonable

sin. But business men make no pretense of fine English. Just good hard-headed sense. . . . Anyway, the Personal Analysis Bureau finds it necessary to use this old ruse:

One of our local members has suggested that we send you a "Personal Analysis Rater" and the latest copy of the Personal Development Bulletin, which is issued only to our members. In this national publication you will find articles written by Elbert H. Gary, Chairman, United States Steel Corporation; Frank A. Seiberling, President, Seiberling Rubber Company, and other leaders in the business world.

Judge Gary was always good for a Success promotion before his death, and there is no reason why he should be dropped from the list of splendid examples now. The Personal Analysis reference was made, however, I believe, before the great and good head of the Steel Corporation had shuffled off his mortal coil. The inevitable catch phrase—"Personal Analysis Rater," in this case—is likewise a powerful puller. Who could resist its scientific lure?

Another old bait is pulled out of the mothballs and slipped on the hook:

In order to introduce this new and practical executive service, we are sending out a few of these gratis, as an advertising feature, to secure a select local roster of progressive business men who believe in constructive work of this kind and who would endorse the service if it meets with their approval.

The success promotion, the reader notes, is advancing. This one flatters prospective members by presuming to assume that they have

already achieved Success, but might be interested in a little more of it. Just how far, in other words, can you go? And, of course, only the Personalanalysis Rater contains the answer.

\* \* \*

As Success was given its own magazine, or magazines, if one includes the *American* and others of their ilk, so must *Personality*, its first cousin, bestow its name on a publication. Doubleday, Page and Company gave the world the first issue of *Personality* last November (O momentous month!). Its purpose was declared in an editorial announcement:

Whether in business or trade, science or art, learning or commerce—no matter what is the field, there lies behind the striving of each winner a story that contains both interest and inspiration. This magazine will devote itself to discovering the thrills and lessons in these life stories. All Americans admire achievement. . . . It will be the purpose of the new *Personality* to help, interest and entertain every reader who harbors the spark of ambition—which means everybody.

Nothing new or startling about that. *Personality* was simply taking its cue from *Success* and the *American* and deciding to enjoy a little of that subscriber's money itself. Some of the articles in the first issue are interesting in the types they offer for "achievement": "Coolidge to His Shoemaker," by James C. Young; "My Gardens," by Edward W. Bok; "Was Roosevelt a Genius?" by Lawrence F. Abbott; "A Tennis Ace Who's a Financier," by John R. Tunic; "George Eastman the Silent," by Diana Rice.

Coolidge, Bok, Roosevelt, a tennis player, a manufacturer of kodaks. And "the larger life," doubtless.

It seems almost too much to hope that the paying public is getting wise to the overworking of the personality punch, but it appears that *Personality* finds the sledding a little rough. At any rate, the publishers have found it necessary to inform me, entirely of their own volition, that my name has been placed on *Personality's* subscriber list "to receive PERSONALITY, a brand new magazine with a brand new idea." I wonder why their sudden generosity, but the circular letter, a little farther down, is disillusioning:

If you remit within a week, we shall enter your name to receive free of charge a 175-page book that will give you the keenest enjoyment. It is called "One Week's Reading." It contains an excellent selection of daily readings for a whole week—gems from the great masters of the past four hundred years—fiction, essays, tragedy, fantasy, poetry, drama, humor! For seven whole days you can live in peace and contentment with a good book, love the beauty of its verse, shiver with excitement over four or five murders, weep with a broken-hearted dwarf, and laugh uproariously at Flannery's cat.

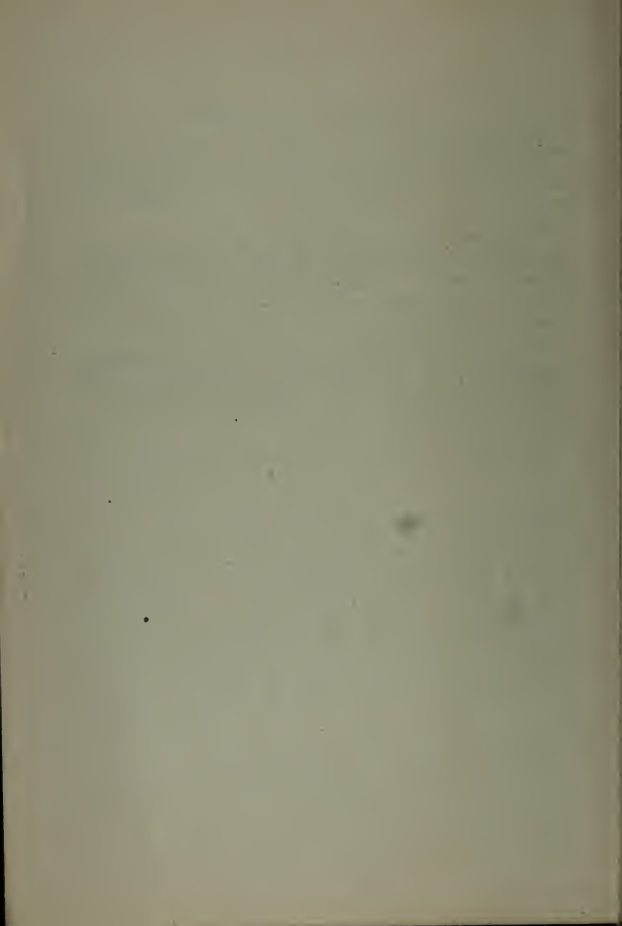
"All for the small price of a dime, ten cents," one feels like shouting after a perusal of that ballyhoo. But the publishers want not ten cents, but a dollar for a four months' subscription to their journal of personal magnetism. *Personality*, one may gather, is failing to sell itself, even though:

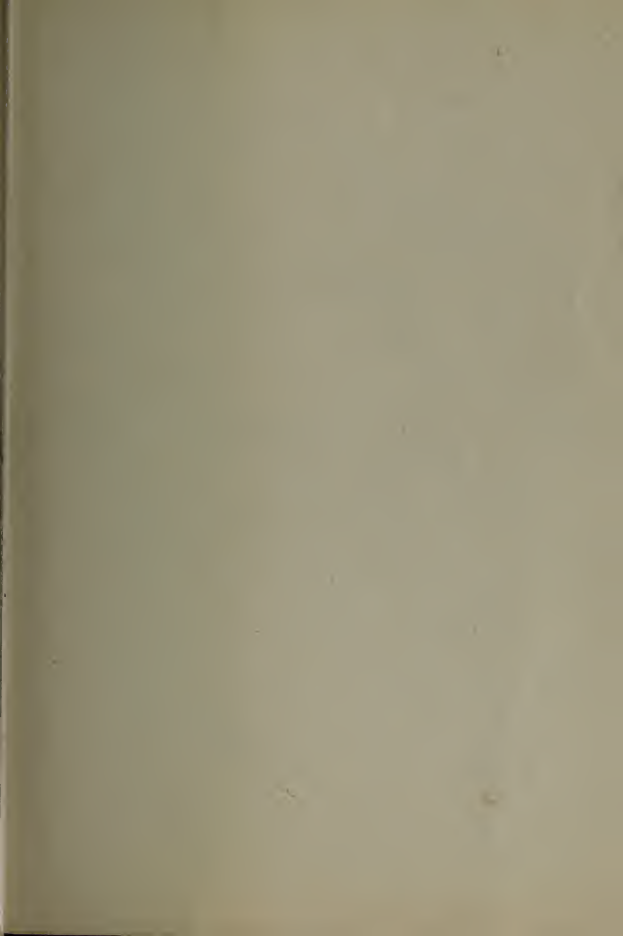


The magazine will entertain you mightily, but it will do more than that—it will fire you with ambition, teach you the things that have enabled others to succeed, warn you of the pitfalls that have kept others from success.

Introductions to Governor Al Smith, Thomas A. Edison, Edsel Ford, Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, "Red" Grange, Walter P. Chrysler, Jeanne Eagels and others are promised "in intimate, unusual articles."

There is little doubt, I think, that *Personality*, backed by Mr. Doubleday, will prosper. Barnum's old role of one a minute still holds.







**E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS**  
**EDITOR**  
**LITTLE BLUE BOOKS**

